

FROM KANSAS CITY, KANSAS.

THE WILLARD CASE ON TRIAL IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS.

The Mayor of Argentine Is Accused of Violating the State Prohibitory Law by Failing to Notify the County Attorney of the Existence of Joints in the City Over Which He Reigns—A Shooting Scrape in Armstrong — Bethany Hospital Moved Into Its New Quarters—Other Events of Interest and Suburban Gossip.

The case of the State against Frank A. Willard, Mayor of Argentine, charged with malfeasance in office in failing to notify the county attorney of the existence of joints in that place, is now on trial in the Court of Common Pleas. Judge Anderson called the case for trial yesterday morning, and it took until 5 o'clock last evening to secure a jury. The regular panel of jurors was exhausted before noon and a special venire of twelve was drawn. A sufficient number of them showed up in the afternoon to fill the box and the trial of the case was then commenced.

The State is represented by Attorneys Cobb, Carskadon and Getty, while the defense is represented by Attorneys Hale, Carroll and Bailey. The first witness called by the State was Charles Dolly, city clerk of Argentine. When he took the stand, and before he had been asked any questions, Attorney Hale filed an objection to Carskadon and Getty assisting in the prosecution of the case. He claimed that neither of them had been requested by the county attorney to assist him, and, furthermore, that Carskadon was barred because of his being a non-resident of the State. Attorney Getty admitted that his retainer came from another source, although he did not know the name of the man who gave it to him. He said, however, that it was a member of the Argentine fire department. Judge Anderson overruled the objection of Attorney Hale and the State began the examination of the witness. The records of the clerk's office were introduced to show that Willard was elected Mayor last spring and that he is now acting as such. Before the attorneys got through with the books Judge Anderson adjourned court until today.

The Willard case is creating much interest among the local office-holders. Willard, it is claimed, violated that section of the State prohibitory law which provides that a Mayor, city marshal, constable or policeman shall notify the county attorney of the existence of any and all joints within their knowledge. The penalty is a fine not to exceed \$500 and a forfeiture of office. To anyone who is the least bit posted on Argentine politics it is apparent that Willard's arrest was a political scheme and for that reason, it is the opinion of many, it will be extremely difficult to convict him. A peculiar feature about the case is that Willard is the only official attacked. If the State intends to go after all the officials in this county who have violated the law that Willard is charged with violating nobody has any objections, but to single out one man looks more like persecution than prosecution, so many claim. In the event that war was declared on all the officers in this county for violating that particular provision of the law and convictions secured, a new election would have to be held and every office in the county from dog catcher up, with the probable exception of the judges of the two courts, filled with new men.

Attorney Hale said yesterday that in all probability some of the men who are pushing the case against Willard, would hear something drop before long. He declared that one official at Argentine had testified in Police court there over 200 times against jointists during the past eighteen months and that he had absolutely failed to give the county attorney notice of the existence of these joints.